

TOWN OF
ARLINGTON



Cemetery Commission

Date: June 12, 2024
Time: 9:03am
Location: Mt. Pleasant Cemetery Chapel

Minutes

Attendance: Commissioners Michele Hassler, Bill McCarthy, Brian Hasbrouk, DPW Director, Mike Rademacher, Cemetery Sup, Jason Jones

1. Town Manager, James Feeney, Arlington Housing Authority Director, Jack Nagle, Deputy Fire Chief, Ryan Melly, Abacus Project Manager, Annie Steele, were present to talk about the request for an access gate from Chestnut Manor into Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on Willow Ave. The Arlington Housing Authority is building a group home and asking permission to have an exit only gate into Mt. Pleasant Cemetery for emergency vehicles. A knox box would be placed on the housing side of the fence with access only attainable by the fire department. The gate would not be used for anything other than emergency vehicles. The first project was shut down about 2008/2009, as residents wanted green space kept in place in the front of Chestnut Manor. Emergency vehicles would come down the road to Chestnut Manor and the gate would allow exit through the cemetery. Brian asked who would be responsible for keeping the gate clear of snow.

Michele inquired as to how long these plans have been in the making and at what point did the fire department get involved with their suggestions, and asked if there are no other areas to build this project with better access that is already available. Jack Nagle said 6 months at least and that Chestnut Manor was the only great spot that they own for this. Michele referenced Mass. General Laws, Chapter 114, Section 17, 41 and 42. She asked about the width of the fire trucks and emergency vehicles, the weights, and the concerns of these vehicles coming in from Sachem Ave and over the bridge if they could not come in from Medford St., how wide the gate had to be, could the vehicles even make the turns and about the placement of a hydrant. When the hydrant gets flushed it would go downhill and could flood the graves.

Michele confirmed with the MWRA that none of their pipes are under the grass along the area the AHA wants to access on Willow Ave in the cemetery. Concern was also expressed for the integrity of the brick pillars at the cemetery gates and the restored historic vaults near the intended opening. Jack Nagle, Annie Steele and Ryan Melly left the meeting at 9:50am.

The commissioners continued to talk about the request and Bill brought up how we never know when an emergency would occur, what if there is a funeral there and the trucks can't get in or out due to the cars there for services? What would happen then? A motion was placed to vote to allow the AHA to have the emergency egress out of Chestnut Manor into Mt. Pleasant Cemetery onto Willow Ave. that they are requesting for their project. A NO vote was made by Bill and Michele. Brian voted Yes. By the vote of 2:1 the request was denied.

2. Mike informed the commission that Dan Warren met with Cassidy Forge about Medford Street fence and gates and we are waiting for a quote for services.
3. The Town engineer is leaving so this will further delay mapping out the areas we need for graves to be able to sell them.
4. The Fallen British monument footing in the Old Burying Ground will be done by Jason and Dan- they have the dimensions and location needed from George Parsons.
5. The Tree department has planted 6 lilac trees behind the dirt bin by the garage.
6. Michele let everyone know that Treasurer's motion for the Prudent Spending Article passed through TM.
7. Minutes of May 8, 2024 were approved.
8. Six (6) deeds were signed.
9. Michele asked that the commission review the disinterment form and possibly come up with new criteria for disinterments. Michele asked Jean to get other examples of forms and criteria from other cemeteries to see what they do/require.
10. Michele reminded the commissioners that June is also when the price structure is usually reviewed, so please look this over to make any suggested changes.
11. The columbarium walkway project is currently underway with a new area of planting in the back. Work is ongoing currently.

12. Memorial Day was met with very few complaints. The staff was available the whole weekend for any issues.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40am
Next meeting scheduled will be
July 10, 2024

Respectfully submitted
Jean Smith

Board of Cemetery Commissioners
Michele A. Hassler, Chairperson
William F. McCarthy
Brian L. Hasbrouck